



TOWN OF ASHBURNHAM

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TOWN ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT February 17, 2015

Town Administrator's reports are available on-line at <http://www.ashburnham-ma.gov>

TOWN COMMITTEES

Currently there are openings on the following (1) Conservation Commission, (1) Council on Aging Board, (1) Parks and Recreation, (2) Historical Commission, and (2) Zoning Board of Appeals. These are listed on the Town's website under Volunteer Opportunities.

FY 16 BUDGET

The AWRSD Budget will be presented at their February 3, 2015 meeting.

FY16 is going to see some changes in how we operate. With the retirement of Fire Chief Paul Zbikowski, Treasurer Paul Pollastri, Assistant Treasurer Barbara Brown and Deputy Fire Chief Jerry Descoteaux several changes will be implemented.

Treasurer's Department

Mary Ellen Kelly will become the new Assistant Treasurer and for the first time all payroll will be outsourced to Harpers Payroll service. This will streamline the process and take some of the pressure off of that department.

Land Use

Mary Ellen Kelly will be replaced in the Land Use Department and with the increase of activity in all the Departments that make up Land Use (Building Dept., Conservation, Planning Board, ZBA and Board of Health) a ½ part-time position will be added. There is also a increase to the Inspector's pay rates to keep in line with other towns. The cost of the Land Use department is fully funded by the fees collected.

Assessor's Department

I have put in the FY16 budget a change in the Assessor's Department. Several years ago, RRG was hired to do all our assessing functions and coupled with a part-time position, made up our assessing department. This meant that during vacation, sick time, personal times the office was not opened. RRG submitted a proposal that would increase the budget by approximately \$6,000 but would give the taxpayers more available window time and have the department operate in a seamless fashion.

Council on Aging

For many years Ashburnham has been searching for an appropriate solution to the activities for our seniors. Westminster is just completing a new COA facility in western Westminster. They have invited us to join with them in a combined Senior Center. This new center will enhance the programming and make the facility accessible 5 days a week with hot meals. The cost is an increase of \$26,000 but far less than any other solution we have to date.

Library

We have a regenerated Library with our new Library Director, and with their plans to increase programs and improve operations, they have requested a new full-time position that will be partially pay for out of their Library Trust funds.

DPW

There takes a certain amount of employees to make the DPW work. We have historically been sub-divided into Highway, Municipal Grounds, and Water and Sewer. With a long-term illness and two resignations we have had to shift things around to make it work and have realized there is a better combination. We will be moving one employee from Water and Sewer over into the DPW. When water-breaks occur (much less with improvements to the system) employees would be temporarily reassigned.

In our Charter I need the Boards support to make changes or reorganize departments.

FIRE UNION

Fire union has ratified agreement.

DISPATCH UNION

First scheduled meeting for the Dispatch union is Wednesday the 4th of February. I will be meeting with the Board in executive session at the February 2nd meeting.

MIIA

I attended the MMA conference the 22-24th of January and it was a very good seminar.

LAND USE ADMINISTRATOR

Department heads met and reviewed the top four candidates for interview. We would like to get the new position filled within the next two weeks.

STORM OF JANUARY 27th

Ashburnham received 30 inches of snow and the preparation and communication that was done before hand by the DPW, Fire, Police, and Light departments minimized any negative impact to our residents. The support of the residents by staying off the streets made the cleanup much easier. Great job by all involved!!